

Trump’s agricultural advisers are familiar faces among farm groups

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Republican control over Congress also raises the possibility of reforms to the Endangered Species Act, depending on the priorities of lawmakers, he said.

“The law itself has a poor track record of recovering species,” Lyon said.

Another positive factor for farmers and ranchers is the potential for a pro-agriculture chief of the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, he said.

The Obama administration will likely try to push through new regulations before leaving office, which would require time to reverse, but the Trump administration can overturn “guidance documents” for how regulators enforce existing rules, he said.

“We hope he’ll remove a lot of those guidance documents that would be harmful to farmers and ranchers,” Lyon said.

Many of Trump’s agricultural advisers are familiar faces among farm groups, which bodes well for the industry’s positions being heard by top federal officials, said Galen.

“He’s got a good sounding board going into his administration,” he said.

Despite the potential up- sides of the Trump presidency, agriculture groups do have some concerns about some potential policies.

Immigration

Trump’s vow to deport illegal immigrants poses a threat to many employees in the dairy industry, for example.

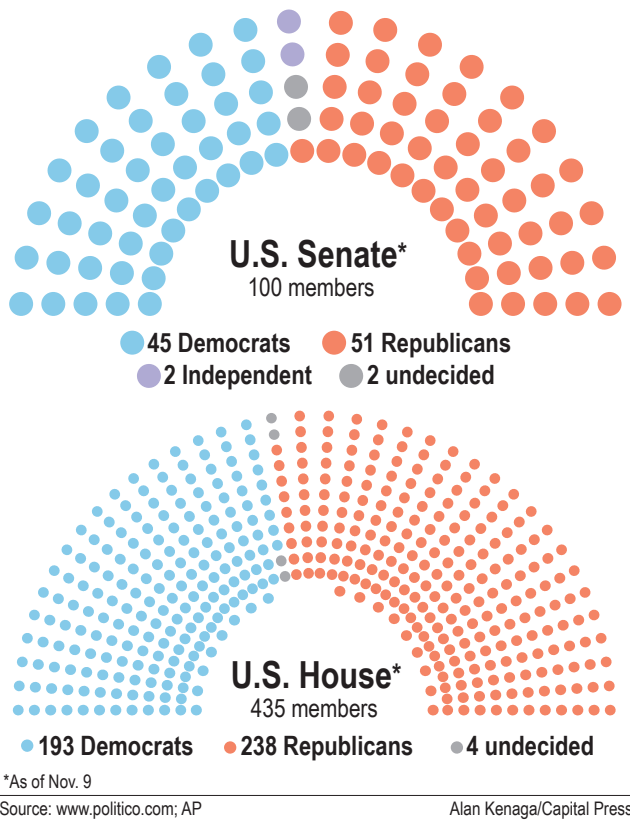
“Farmers have got to have a reliable workforce,” said Galen. “Not knowing what will happen to their workforce, that’s a deterrent to growers.”

Even so, Galen said he’s optimistic that business leaders can influence Trump’s thinking on immigrants and the economy.

“We just have to see where the rhetoric may differ from the reality,” he said.

Republican control of the

2016 congressional election results



White House and Congress is bringing some optimism to agricultural leaders who for years have been working on immigration reform to help labor-intensive agriculture.

Two big elements are legal work status for illegal aliens and making the H-2A visa agricultural foreign guestworker program easier for employers to use.

“Chances are very good that significant immigration reform legislation will be enacted,” Leon Sequeira, a Kentucky labor attorney and former assistant secretary of labor under President George W. Bush, told Capital Press.

The focus will be on the Senate, he said, where the Democratic minority will still have a significant role.

President Trump will enact regulatory and policy reforms, including in immigration and H-2A, he said.

“From a national perspective, growers grown weary of

the Obama regulatory juggernaut can breathe at least a sign of relief,” said Craig Regelbrugge, national co-chairman of Ag Coalition for Immigration Reform and senior vice president of AmericanHort.

“For an industry built by and reliant on foreign labor, the big question that looms is labor and immigration. Optimists are hopeful that Trump will behave like a pragmatic businessman. If so, our task is to educate, educate and fast,” Regelbrugge said.

“Pessimists,” he said, “don’t see how he walks back the populist tough talk that propelled him across the Rust Belt.”

Trade

Trump’s pledge to terminate or renegotiate the North American Free Trade Agreement may affect farm exports to Canada and Mexico, which are major buyers of U.S. crops.

The total value of U.S. agricultural exports has been steadily increasing, peaking in

2014 at \$152 billion while U.S. farm imports were \$109 billion

“There is a concern with trade,” said Lyon.

Nonetheless, Lyon is hopeful Trump understands the importance of trade to agriculture, and simply wants U.S. manufacturing to benefit from it as much as the farm industry.

University of California-Davis agricultural economist Daniel Sumner believes trade deals such as the Trans-Pacific Partnership have a better chance of being implemented by Trump despite his campaign rhetoric.

While Hillary Clinton would have been beholden to unions and other interests that inherently resist trade deals, Sumner believes Trump can renegotiate the TPP and get it passed in much the same way that then-President Bill Clinton did with the North American Free Trade Agreement.

“He did just enough to claim it was his own and said ‘lets do this deal,’” said Sumner, director of the UC’s Agricultural Issues Center.

Sumner’s thoughts came as numerous commodity groups put out statements on Nov. 9 reiterating their support for the 12-nation TPP, which would write rules for global trade the Obama administration argues would increase American-made exports and grow the U.S. economy. Trump argued it was poorly negotiated and would cost U.S. jobs.

It’s understandable that commodity groups are nervous, said Eric Houk, director of the Agricultural Business Institute at California State University-Chico.

“Trade plays a significant role in California’s agricultural economy,” Houk said in an email. “It makes sense that some agricultural commodity groups might be concerned about the results of this election and the uncertainty of future trade deals.”

Reporters Mateusz Perkowski, Dan Wheat and Tim Hearden contributed to this report.

Environmental groups wary of Trump

By CAROL RYAN DUMAS
Capital Press

Environmental groups vow to continue their fight for environmental causes despite President-elect Donald Trump’s victory.

The Natural Resources Defense Council, which strongly endorsed Hillary Clinton, sent out a rally cry to Americans to stand up and defend “our environment and health.”

“If Donald Trump thinks he can launch a big polluter assault on our air, waters, wildlife and lands, we’ll build a wall of opposition to stop him. Whatever else we may have voted for on Tuesday, we haven’t turned away from generations of common-sense environmental safeguards. We’re not about to turn away now,” said Rhea Suh, NRDC president.

Trump is “a disaster for public lands, wildlife and climate,” and the hill on climate change and the global extinction crisis “just got unquestionably steeper,” said Kieran Suckling, executive director of the Center for Biological Diversity.

“But this election will spark millions of new people to join us in storming that hill. We will not stand down, we will grower bigger, louder, fiercer,” he said.

Defenders of Wildlife is less strident but stated it would be vigilant against attacks on the Endangered Species Act and public lands.

Although the organization knows it won’t see eye-to-eye with Trump and his administration on many matters, it believes they share common interests in the protection of wildlife and public lands, Defenders President an CEO Jamie Rappaport Clark stated.

“There is much to be done to prevent extinction and to protect and restore our wildlife legacy for future generations ... we stand ready to work with President Trump as we face the opportunities and challenges ahead,” she said.

Food and Water Watch said it is clear that the American People don’t support the business-as-usual policies of Clinton and the Democratic leadership.

The Trump administration will likely be filled with people who will benefit financially from more fracking, more industrial agriculture and expanded deregulation masquerading as trade policy, said Wenonah Hauter, the organization’s executive director.

“We expect to see more deregulation of industry that will damage our communities, our environment, and our democracy. We must redouble our efforts to build a movement that holds our elected officials accountable — and that provides a counterweight to the big business interests that continue to look out only for profits,” she said.

District served as mediator between federal wildlife officials, local landowners

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Only a handful of Oregon counties, all of them rural, sparsely populated and east of the Cascades, maintain the county court system of government. They aren’t about to change.

Harney County is deep red Republican. President Obama only got 25 percent of the county vote in 2008, and only 23 percent in 2012. But Eastern Oregon’s votes have al-

ways been swamped by Portland, Salem and Eugene, and always will be, which is partly why there is loud disagreement with federal land management policies. The Bundy occupiers figured they’d find support in Harney County.

For the most part, they didn’t. People such as Grasty and Sheriff Dave Ward told them to go home. There were a lot of factors for that, but the main one was that you don’t show up as an armed militia

in Harney County, take over a public place where county residents work and visit, and expect to be welcomed — no matter how much people may agree with your baseline message about government.

In addition, this was a county that in 2014 forged the first collaboration between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and private landowners on conserving Greater sage grouse habitat. It was a remarkable series of agree-

ments: Cattle ranchers agreed to manage their rangeland in a way that benefited the bird, while the feds promised 30 years protection from additional regulation even if sage grouse were added to the endangered species list.

The agreements were quickly and widely copied in other Oregon counties and in other states. Many people credit them with the government’s decision to keep sage grouse off the list.

That was all in the background when the occupiers arrived, took over, riled up the county, got arrested and went to trial.

Then the federal jury acquitted the occupiers because prosecutors overreached on the conspiracy angle instead of sticking with simpler weapons, trespass and work interference charges. Marty Goold, director of the Harney County Soil & Water Conservation District, said the verdict was like pulling a bandage off a wound that hadn’t healed.

The district served as mediator between federal wildlife officials and local landowners. Despite the verdict, Goold said people involved in the sage grouse agreements are hanging together.

“I’ve seen no ripple in our organization that would tell me or indicate to me that

there is a feeling of animosity or distrust in working through the process,” she said. “It’s a continuing discussion. We discuss hard issues with U.S. Fish and Wildlife but do it in a respectful manner to the best of our ability.”

Goold said she’d like to see more consistent land management “across the fencelines,” where private land bumps up against federal land. She said people have to keep talking to each other.

“That’s the critical piece I think a lot of people have to keep in the forefront of their minds when they take on an effort like we did,” Goold said. “There will be some real tough times but there will be some really great rewards.”

Grasty, the county judge, said the fractures remain despite the county’s inclination to move on.

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